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Before the
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20554

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

In the Matter of

Implementation of Section 25 of the Cable
Television Consumer Protection and
Competition Act of 1992

Direct Broadcast Satellite Service
Obligations

MM Docket No. 93-25

COMMENTS OF KNOWLEDGE TV

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SUMMARY

Knowledge TV is a 24-hour educational channel which delivers distance learning in association with accredited public and private universities. Knowledge TV delivers college and graduate level degree-awarding programs; computer training; and administrative support to universities, such as enrollment, the provision of text books, voice mail, computer bulletin boards, internet gateway and other electronic communications services. Knowledge TV is carried to approximately 25 million cable television subscribers, but is not carried by any DBS Carrier. Including this service as among the satellite services which could satisfy the DBS set aside would deliver educational resources to areas in particular need: the rural, unserved areas which form the core of the satellite audience. Knowledge TV can help provide every citizen with the opportunity to obtain a college education, and provide a universally available service which trains viewers in the tools needed for the information highway.

To facilitate the delivery of educational programming through the DBS set-aside spectrum, the FCC should adopt definitions which permit noncommercial educational institutions to use every variety of technology and service packager to reach their audience, including public-private coventures such as Knowledge TV. Educational and informational programming suppliers may select any one of a number of arrangements for distributing their programming to viewers: Instructional Television Fixed Service; MMDS; terrestrial cable television; wireline telephone companies; educational access channels on cable systems; "commercial use" channels; and hybrid ventures like Knowledge TV. They all provide educational and instructional programming which

Congress is seeking to disseminate. In determining what constitutes "eligible" programming, the Commission should focus on the underlying educational and informational nature of the programming, and not on the distribution technology or the financial structure of the program packager.

A broad definition of the types of entities that qualify for the set-aside is consistent with Congress' intent. Section 255(b)(3) states that DBS providers meet their set-aside requirements "by making capacity available to national educational programming suppliers." 47 U.S.C. § 335(b)(3). In defining "national educational programming supplier," Congress provides an illustrative list which may include any vehicle, including commercial channels like Knowledge TV, used to deliver non-commercial, educational content to the home. A broad reading would be consistent with Congress' instructions to encourage "public-private ventures" for the National Education Technology Funding Corporation, and with the general mandate of Section 7 to "encourage the provision of new technologies and services to the public." A reading which does not discriminate among packagers or technologies also harmonizes with the neutrality which characterize myriad regulations. The government does not pick favorites in governing a cable operator's choice of cable channels; in valuing a channel for cable rate regulation; in measuring broadcasters' compliance with children's programming requirements; in preferring facilities based telephone providers or resellers; or in selecting speakers on public access channels. A policy which embraces a variety of vehicles by which noncommercial educational programming may reach viewers will also help defend the constitutionality of the DBS set aside itself.

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COMMENTS OF KNOWLEDGE TV

JEC Knowledge TV ("Knowledge") submits these comments in response to the Commission's request to refresh the record on how best to implement the DBS educational programming set aside.¹ Knowledge was launched in November, 1987 as Mind Extension University, Inc. It is a Colorado corporation owned and controlled primarily by Jones Education Company, Inc. ("JEC") and is devoted to educational and informational programming offered in partnership with university degree programs nationwide. The network formally changed its name to JEC Knowledge TV in October, 1996.

¹ The *Public Notice* released on January 31, 1997 seeks new and revised comments on the issues raised in the *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking* ("NPRM") released March 2, 1993 in the captioned matter, and on any other issues relevant to implementation of Section 25 of the Cable Television Consumer Protection Act of 1992 ("1992 Cable Act"). The Comment period was extended by Order, DA 97-602, released March 21, 1997.

Section 25 of the 1996 Act directs the Commission to promulgate rules that require providers of direct broadcast satellite ("DBS") to set aside a portion of their channels for non-commercial, educational and informational programming. Knowledge's comments focus on one issue: how best may the Commission meet the Act's goals when defining the entities or services which might satisfy the set-aside obligations.

I. KNOWLEDGE PROVIDES NON-COMMERCIAL, EDUCATIONAL AND INFORMATIONAL PROGRAMMING

Knowledge is a 24-hour programming network that provides educational and informational services and programming to approximately 25 million cable television subscribers in every state nationwide. It is currently carried by all of the top Multiple System Operators but not by any of the DBS Carriers.

In association with accredited public and private universities, Knowledge delivers college and graduate level degree programs and a complement of personal and professional development courses. In addition to packaging and distributing this distance learning service to subscribers, Knowledge's parent company, JEC, provides administrative support to participating universities and offers student services, such as enrollment, the provision of text books, voice mail, computer bulletin boards, internet gateway and other electronic communications services. Thus, Knowledge provides not merely distance learning, but accredited courses to students which it enrolls in degree-awarding programs, using television, the Internet, World Wide Web and videotapes. Participating universities are California State University, Dominguez Hills; Colorado

Electronic Community College; University of Colorado/Colorado Springs; The George Washington University; Governors State University; Kansas State University; Oklahoma State University; Regis University; Seattle Central Community College; University of Delaware; International University; and Washington State University.

Through Knowledge, individuals who are remote from educational institutions, whose schedules permit course work only during selective hours, or who otherwise are unable to place themselves in a physical classroom as full or part time students may attend virtual classes and receive real degrees. Knowledge has even awarded scholarships for its distance learning courses to cable television subscribers in several states.

For example, a 25-year-old in Homer, Alaska had long sought to earn an MBA; but a move to Anchorage--225 miles away--would have required her to leave her home and ruin her career. She earned an MBA from Colorado State University entirely through Knowledge TV. She watched all class lectures on television, ordered textbooks and course materials by telephone, and spoke with her professors through toll-free telephone calls. An electronic bulletin board kept her in touch with other students. Tests were proctored at a local library or high school. Exhibit 1 is filled with news reports of this and similar examples. Exhibit 2 catalogues all of the courses available.

In addition, Knowledge transmits documentaries and other educational programming concerning computers and technology, global culture and languages, health and

wellness, and business and finance. Examples of specific programs offered by Knowledge include: the Global Library Project, in which Knowledge has joined forces with the Library of Congress to share the holdings of the world's largest library² with the nation's television viewers; "The Cutting Edge Medical Report" and "Healthy Women 2,000," providing the latest medical information for disease prevention and treatment, developed by Knowledge in conjunction with the American Medical Association and other professional medical associations; "Living Right," a program dedicated to issues of staying fit, eating right, and remaining safe and healthy; informational and tutorial programs intended to promote computer literacy, including "Computer Kids" and "Home Computing;" international news and information from Europe (such as a nightly newscast from German Public Television);³ "You, Inc.," a half-hour program addressing issues faced by veteran and up-and-coming entrepreneurs; and "Writers' Block," a program taped at Borders bookstore in Washington D.C., in which authors and an audience of adults participate in a moderated discussion of selected books. In addition, Knowledge provides teacher training for the internet through certificate programs with The George Washington University and International University.

The service has been developed in fulfillment of Glen Jones' well-known dedication to using the multichannel world to offer educational vehicles available to all.

² The Library of Congress is the world's largest library, containing more than 110 million items in nearly every language and format -- from ancient Chinese woodblock prints to compact discs.

³ Knowledge's international news programs include shows in German, French, Spanish and English. See Exhibit 3, *Devastated*, Corpus Christi Caller-Times, Jan. 23, 1997 ("[Knowledge] shows European news every afternoon in German, French and Spanish. It's the *only* program in our language in TV and not only emotionally vital to us European viewers, but also important to keep up with language, culture and politics in Europe.") (emphasis in original).

Knowledge's mission is to deliver education and training to every citizen. Including this service in satellite services would deliver educational resources in area where educational institutions need the greatest assistance reaching students: in rural, unserved areas which form the core of the satellite audience. Knowledge provides not only the avenue for earning degrees, but up to the minute computer training--the tools for using the telecommunications infrastructure being deployed today. Knowledge's mission could not be more consistent with the Administration's commitment to afford every citizen the opportunity to obtain at least two years of college education, and to extend the benefits of information technology universally, wherever one may choose to live.

II. KNOWLEDGE PROVIDES THE TYPE OF PROGRAMMING THAT CONGRESS SOUGHT TO PROMOTE THROUGH THE DBS SET ASIDE REQUIREMENT

The broad purpose of Section 25 is to provide "educational programming" to DBS subscribers. H.R. Conf. Rep. No. 862, 102d Cong. 2d Sess. 99 (1992). To facilitate this purpose, Congress directed the Commission to promulgate regulations that require DBS providers to set aside four to seven percent of their channel capacity for "non-commercial, educational and informational programming." 47 U.S.C. § 335(b)(1).

A. Educational Programmers May Choose Many Technologies and Packagers to Deliver Educational Programming

Knowledge submits that the "non-commercial" requirement set forth in the Act is not a barrier to opening the DBS set-aside spectrum to a wide variety of national educational and

informational programming, including that offered by Knowledge. No doubt, as the Commission has already noted, entities such as Public Broadcasting Service ("PBS") should qualify for the set-aside. *NPRM* at ¶ 43. But our educational institutions should be encouraged to use every variety of technology or service packager to reach their audience. The Commission must ensure that its rules are not limited to favor only those "channels" which are publicly financed or organized to preclude private participation at any level. The rules must be sufficiently broad to also embrace educational programming offered over services like Knowledge, which have partnered with educational institutions, and permit such services to count toward satisfying DBS operators' set-aside requirements.

The fact that PBS and Knowledge represent different transportation devices for delivering the programming to viewers is irrelevant. Educational and informational programming suppliers may select any one of a number of arrangements for distributing their programming to viewers. Knowledge is an attractive arrangement to certain universities because of the network's national distribution, and the administrative support offered by Knowledge. Other educational programming suppliers may opt to provide distance learning using other packagers or other technologies. Consider the options which exist for educational institutions to reach viewers and students. Instructional Television Fixed Service ("ITFS") may be used to provide formal educational programming offered for credit to enrolled students of public and private schools, colleges and universities, as well as other educational, instructional and cultural programming.⁴ MMDS channels are permitted to share ITFS channels in partnerships encouraged by the

⁴ 47 C.F.R. § 74.931.

Commission.⁵ In partnership with regional educational institutions, several terrestrial cable television and wireline telephone companies provide distance learning to residents in their service areas.⁶ Local schools may use educational access channels on cable systems, may combine their resources through access trusts, and may even lease "commercial use" channels. Aside from the different distribution technologies employed by these entities, the educational and instructional programming that they provide is much like that offered by Knowledge and PBS.

Congress did not instruct the Commission, in the statute or the legislative history, to differentiate eligible programming based on the methods employed by the programming supplier to distribute its programming to viewers. Indeed, there is nothing in the statute or the legislative history that justifies a distinction between PBS' programming and the programming distributed by Knowledge. In determining what constitutes "eligible" programming, the Commission should focus on the educational and informational nature of the programming, and not on the distribution technology or the financial structure of the program packager. The Commission should encourage and promote all innovative arrangements, especially public-private partnerships, that foster the dissemination of educational and information services and programming to viewers. The distribution method chosen by the programmer is irrelevant to the educational and informational nature of the underlying programming, and the Commission's

⁵ *Second Report and Order*, Amendment of Parts 21, 43, 74, 78, and 94 of the Commission's Rules Governing Use of the Frequencies in the 2.1 and 2.5 GHz Bands Affecting: Private Operational-Fixed Microwave Service, Multipoint Distribution Service, Multichannel Multipoint Distribution Service, Instructional Television Fixed Service, and Cable Television Relay Service, 6 FCC Rcd 6792 (1991).

⁶ *See Separate Statement of Commissioner Julia Johnson and Chairman Sharon L. Nelson on Recommended Decision of the Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service*, CC Docket NO. 96-45 (Nov. 7, 1996) (praising distance learning in general and the Florida Distance Learning Network specifically).

rules should not be used to "steer" institutions to chose one technology, service packager, or other distribution vehicle over another.

B. The DBS Set Aside Law Permits a Broad Definition of Eligible Programmers

A broad definition of the types of entities that qualify for the set-aside is consistent with Congress' intent. The only criterion provided by Congress concerning the qualifications of a program supplier is found in Section 355(b)(3), which states that DBS providers meet their set-aside requirements "by making capacity available to national educational programming suppliers." 47 U.S.C. § 335(b)(3). In defining "national educational programming supplier," Congress does not describe the characteristics of such entities but instead provides an illustrative list of the type of entities that the term "includes."⁷ Canons of statutory construction dictate that Congress' use of the word "includes" means that the list that follows is illustrative, not exhaustive.⁸

In light of Congress' overarching goal to provide educational programming to DBS subscribers, the myriad of methods that may be employed to distribute this programming to viewers, and the expansive statutory definition of national education programming supplier, the

⁷ Section 355(b)(5)(B) states the "term 'national educational programming supplier' includes any qualified noncommercial educational television station, other public telecommunications entities, and public or private educational institutions." 47 U.S.C. § 335(b)(5)(B).

⁸ Singer, *Sutherland Statutory Construction* § 46.07 (5th ed.) at 152 ("the word 'includes' is usually a term of enlargement, and not of limitation . . . It, therefore conveys the conclusion that there are other items includable, though not specifically enumerated . . .") (citing cases).

Commission should promulgate rules that ensure that entities such as Knowledge, which provide informational and educational programming to viewers, qualify for the set-aside capacity.

III. A BROAD INTERPRETATION OF ELIGIBLE PROGRAMMING WOULD MEET OTHER LEGAL AND POLICY GOALS

A broad interpretation of what programming is eligible for the DBS set-aside capacity would be consistent with Congress' directives in related contexts, the Communications Act in its entirety, and the Commission's prior decisions and existing rules.

A. The 1996 Act Explicitly Promotes Public Private Partnerships

In the most analogous provision of the 1996 Act, Congress created the National Education Technology Funding Corporation to encourage the exact type of "public-private ventures" for new educational technology that Knowledge represents and public-private ventures for new educational technologies specifically. Telecommunications Act of 1996, Sec. 708. Even before the 1996 Act, the Commission has been under specific instruction to encourage the provision of all new technologies and services to the public. Section 7 provides: "It shall be the policy of the United States to encourage the provision of new technologies and services to the public." 47 U.S.C. § 157. The DBS set aside rules should encourage the carriage of innovative public-private ventures like Knowledge.

B. Federal Law Consistently Seeks Neutrality in Channel Choices

Similarly, the Commission's rules should not create preferences for particular programmers, but instead should define eligible programming according to broad, neutral criteria. This has been the repeated, consistent choice of Congress and the Commission.

(1) **Cable Channels.** Neutrality is the explicit standard under which all the government must operate when dealing with cable television. Section 624(b) limits franchise provisions to "broad categories of video programming," and forbids the government from selecting specific programmers. 47 U.S.C. § 544(b).

(2) **Rate Regulation.** Neutrality has been the rule in the context of rate regulation, in which the Commission has wisely refused to place higher or lower values on channels based on content.⁹

(3) **Broadcasting.** Neutrality has been the rule in broadcasting, in which the Commission measures compliance with children's programming requirements in terms of hours and orientation, and does not focus on the type of producer or packager of the programming. 47 C.F.R. § 73.671 *et seq.*

⁹ *Sixth Order on Reconsideration, Fifth Report and Order, and Seventh Notice of Proposed Rulemaking*, 10 FCC Rcd. 1226, 1252 (1994)(Going Forward Order); *Twelfth Order on Reconsideration*, CSR 92-266 and 93-215 (rel. Aug. 8, 1995) at ¶ 7 (amending rules so as to preclude adverse impact on shopping channels).

(4) **Telephony.** Likewise, in telephony, the Commission has refused to choose favorites among facilities based providers and resellers.¹⁰

(5) **Cable Access.** Finally, in the context of public access on cable television, courts have forbidden the government from influencing the selection of eligible programmers based on content.¹¹

The Commission should take care to act consistently with these guiding principles of neutrality in promulgating rules to effectuate the DBS set-aside requirement. Knowledge is every bit as much a delivery vehicle for educational programming—including educational programming from nonprofit educational institutions—as is PBS. The DBS set aside rules should be structured accordingly.

IV. AN UNDULY NARROW DEFINITION OF ELIGIBLE PROGRAMMING WOULD JEOPARDIZE THE CONSTITUTIONAL VALIDITY OF THE RULES.

It is widely anticipated that the DBS set aside rules will be brought to the Supreme Court. The Court of Appeals only narrowly decided not to rehear the panel's decision upholding the set-aside requirement as constitutional.¹² In a dissenting statement written by Circuit Judge Williams, with whom four of the remaining seven sitting judges

¹⁰ *First Report and Order, Implementation of the Local Competition Provisions of the Telecommunications Act of 1996*, 4 CR 1 at ¶ 977, 61 FR 45475 (Aug. 8, 1996).

¹¹ *See, e.g., Missouri Knights of the Ku Klux Klan v. Kansas City*, 723 F. Supp. 1347 (W.D. Mo. 1989).

¹² *See Time Warner Entertainment Co. v. FCC*, 810 F. Supp. 1302 (D. D.C. 1992), *rev'd*, 93 F.3d 957 (D.C. Cir. 1996), *reh'g en banc denied*, 1997 U.S. App. LEXIS 2016 (D.C. Cir. Feb. 7, 1997).

concurred, Williams criticized the panel's use of the scarcity rational to justify a lower standard of scrutiny for the statutory requirement.¹³ It is highly probable that the rules would be subject to a higher standard of First Amendment scrutiny than that applied by the Court of Appeals panel.

No matter what standard is applied, the Commission must tailor its rules sufficiently to match their constitutional justification. *See Time Warner*, 93 F.3d at 976-77 (citing *Turner Broadcasting System, Inc. v. FCC*, 114 S. Ct. 2445, 2461-62 (1994)). Thus, if Congress' stated purpose is to promote the dissemination of educational programming over DBS, then the rules must not unduly restrict eligible programming to an underbroad subset of the entities that provide such programming. As discussed above, there is nothing in the statute or the legislative history that would justify a distinction among program sources based on the particular medium chosen by the programmer to distribute its programming to viewers. Nor is there a basis for distinguishing programming based on the source of funding for the distributor. In fact, limiting the class of eligible programming to that which is publicly funded would effectively promote the government's viewpoint over that of private industry, in direct contravention of the First Amendment.¹⁴

¹³ *Time Warner Entertainment Co. v. FCC*, 1997 U.S. App. LEXIS 2016 (Williams, J. dissenting) at 1 ("*Red Lion* should not be extended to this medium").

¹⁴ *See Id.* (emphasizing fact that DBS set-aside requirement does "not require or prohibit the carriage of particular ideas or points of view").

To preserve the constitutional integrity of its rules, the Commission should adopt broad, neutral criteria that promotes the government's justifiable objective of disseminating educational programming to DBS viewers and should not unduly limit the class of providers to a subset of sources of such programming.

V. PAID PROGRAMMING SUPPLIERS SHOULD QUALIFY FOR THE SET-ASIDE

A necessary corollary to this principle of neutrality is one of accepting channel distribution arrangements in which the DBS provider pays the program supplier. There is no reason that the Commission should limit eligible programming to programming that must pay for carriage. As recognized by the Commission, DBS providers may actually pay for programming that is otherwise eligible for carriage. *NPRM* at ¶ 51. The fact that DBS providers are willing to pay for such programming is a testament to the high quality of such programming and the decision of DBS providers that such programming would be a valuable addition to their channel line-up. If subscribers are truly to benefit from diverse sources of programming, DBS operators must be permitted to price programming depending on whether it adds value to the mix of existing services being offered by the DBS operator to subscribers. Thus, where programming is truly valuable, the DBS operator should be able to pay the programmer for carriage, even if the programming is carried in fulfillment of the operator's set-aside requirements.

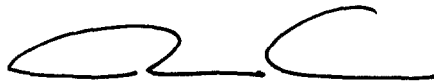
Moreover, as revealed in the context of cable television leased commercial access, the direction of payment often depends upon how the payment is characterized.¹⁵ HBO may be regarded as either paying a net "implicit fee" of \$5 to a distributor for carriage, or being paid a license fee of \$5, after which the distributor collects \$10 and nets \$5 to cover costs plus return. Thus, it would not accomplish anything (except to encourage the re-writing of contracts) to require distribution agreements to be structured so that cash flow is "pointed" in one direction or another. Neither the statute nor the legislative history require such a result, and other provisions of the Communications Act, encouraging public-private partnerships, suggests that the Commission should employ the most flexible approach that is guaranteed to deliver educational programming to DBS subscribers.

¹⁵ *Second Report and Order and Second Order on Reconsideration of the First Report & Order*, CS Docket 96-60, 1997 FCC LEXIS 630, 62 Fed. Reg. 11364 (rel. Feb. 4, 1997).

VI CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, the Commission should adopt a broad definition of programming that is eligible for carriage on DBS channels set-aside for educational programming, in order to facilitate carriage of innovative arrangements such as Knowledge TV.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Paul Glist', written over a horizontal line.

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EXHIBIT 1



USA TODAY

6D • MONDAY, MARCH 14, 1994 • USA TODAY

EDUCATION

Mind Extension University brings college to adults

By Tamara Henry
USA TODAY

DENVER — Elaine Demery of Englewood, Colo., had given up on getting a college degree until she became "a white-haired old lady." Her hectic lifestyle included a 16-year-old son and participation in several community groups.

But Demery learned through one of the organizations about Mind Extension University, a cable TV company serving close to 26 million households with fully accredited college and graduate-level courses and degree programs.

She is glad she joined the professional certificate program on *How to Develop and Manage a Small Business* offered by Regis University through ME/U. Her work during the course directly resulted in her being appointed president of Nelson, Coulson & Associates Inc., a temporary staffing service in Denver.

"The most important thing that this has given me is a level of self-esteem that I had not previously had and that I did not know was missing," says Demery, who in 1965 spent one year at Faris State College in Big Rapids, Mich.

Mind Extension University: The Education Network is the only 24-hour cable channel that offers a bachelor's completion degree from the University of Maryland University College, Kansas State University, Washington State University and Regis University; a master's from George Washington University and the University of Arizona, and an MBA from Colorado State University.

But ME/U is one of dozens of distance learning programs



By Ernie Leyba

FINDING TIME FOR EDUCATION: Elaine Demery studies for a Mind Extension University course during her work lunch break.

— electronic universities — that offer more than 1,000 courses and about 56 degrees. The concept integrates fiber-optic networks, satellites and other communications technologies to link universities to home and work.

Students fulfill the same requirements as those on campus, including writing papers and taking tests. Instead of attending lectures, though, off-campus students can join the class by cable TV or VCR.

Textbooks and all other course material are sent through the mail. Seldom do students visit the campus since they talk with professors via computer, voice mail or an 800 phone number.

ME/U "is for anyone, in any place and at any time," says founder Glenn Jones, CEO of Jones International Ltd., a telecommunications company. "We wanted to take the education tool to people, rather than have people go to the tool."

Getting a degree is important to Joyce Harris, too.

"I knew the only way I'd be able to go back to school was to have some miracle show up on my front step," says the 41-year-old Fort Washington, Md., resident who had dropped out of Marietta College in Ohio in 1975 after 2½ years.

Harris, a technical consultant for Cordant Inc. in Reston, Va., is about five classes away from a bachelor's degree from the University of Maryland. Courses run about \$320, but the company reimburses 75% after finishing the course and the rest if a degree is earned.

"I take one class a semester and that's all I can handle with my other life," Harris says.

Demery worked as manager of finance for Nelson, Coulson before her promotion. She says she used the company for many projects.

"In an advertising and promotion course, I did a campaign that was presented to the board of directors last July," she says. "Next, I did a policy and procedure manual. These were things I was able to do that showcased me in a different light."

Demery estimates it will take about five years to earn her bachelor's but says, "It's a journey. It's not a destination."

Good Housekeeping ^{\$1.95}

How to go to college at home

For someone who is employed or is home raising children, getting a college degree is easier now than ever before. A growing number of colleges have programs that allow students to earn an undergraduate or graduate degree at their own pace—and in their own homes.

TV courses

Students can also take college courses through televised instruction. TV courses are usually supplemented by textbooks and other course material. Here are a few national programs with a wide variety of TV courses. Colleges in your area may also offer televised or videotaped courses.



• **Mind Extension University (ME/U)** is an educational program available through basic cable television, satellite, or videotape. In affiliation with 26 universities, ME/U offers a wide range of undergraduate and graduate credit courses. Students enroll through ME/U and receive credit and a degree from the institution offering the course. Students do the same work as their on-campus counterparts, including writing papers and taking tests, which are monitored by a proctor.

ME/U degree programs include a Bachelor of Arts or Science in Business Management, a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, a Master of Arts in Education, and a Master of Business Administration. For information, call 800-777-6463.

Journal Inquirer

JULY 30, 1994

HOME DELIVERED, 35 CENTS / NEWSSTAND, 50 CENTS

Woman earns college degree remotely

Videotapes, home computer take place of lecture halls, classrooms

By NANCY THOMPSON
Journal Inquirer Staff Writer

MANCHESTER — When Jacqueline Brenner recalls her college days, she doesn't have the usual memories of trudging around campus on snowy days, sleeping through early morning classes, or gathering with classmates at the student center to keep a lively debate going.

Instead Brenner remembers curling up on the couch, the VCR remote control in hand.

Brenner recently received her bachelor's degree, in management studies from the University of Maryland's University College without ever even visiting the school.

To earn her degree, she carried a full load of four courses each semester, watching classes on videotapes, taking part in class discussions on computer bulletin boards and voice mail, and sending in homework via fax or express mail.

She's a member of the first graduating class of the UMUC's bachelor's degree completion program, offered through Mind Extension University: The Education Network and the National Universities Degree Consortium.

It still requires work

Brenner is enthusiastic about the unorthodox route she took to get a degree.

"If you can handle it, I think it's the best way to get an education," she said recently.

Brenner heard about the UMUC program, which provides students who have completed the equivalent of the first two years of college the opportunity to earn their bachelor's degrees in management, from a relative who lives near there.

She was put in touch with the Mind Extension University, a subsidiary of Jones Education Networks Inc., which is the only basic cable television network devoted to education.

While the channel reaches more than 26 million households in 8,500 communities, Manchester isn't one of them. Cox Cable, which serves Manchester, doesn't carry the channel, so Brenner received her classes on videotape.

Students like Brenner apply for admission to the school, the same as traditional students who will attend classes on campus. But once they are accepted, Mind Extension University handles the details that plague so many students' lives — it signs students up for the classes they have chosen, gets their books and syllabi, and lets them know about the time classes will be shown in their area, or, as in Brenner's case, sends out videotapes.

Mind Extension University's goal, according to spokeswoman Tracey Hollingsworth, is to make education accessible to everyone, no matter where they live.

"It would be great if everybody had a campus that offered what they needed that



Jim Michaud / Journal Inquirer

Jacqueline Brenner sits by her personal computer recently.

was nearby," Hollingsworth said, adding that that isn't always the case.

For Brenner, who already had earned an associate's degree in general studies from Manchester Community-Technical College, the videotape program was the only way she could have earned her bachelor's degree at the time because family responsibilities prevented her from attending school.

Brenner had the same requirements as any student attending classes on campus. Having the videotapes allowed her to watch lectures at her leisure, she said, but she still had to meet the same deadlines for completing work as traditional students — and had to finish by the end of a semester or receive an incomplete.

Instructors aren't strangers

Attending school via videotape offered a lot of advantages, Brenner said, including allowing her to watch the tapes when she had time. Having the classes on tape, she said, also allowed her to go back over concepts she didn't understand, to turn up the volume if noises in the apartment she shares with her mother were distracting, or to replay the lecturer's remarks if she happened to fall asleep during class.

She also praised the quality of the classes, which do not merely show professors lecturing in the classroom but include interviews with top professionals in the field.

When a management class did a case study on Chase Manhattan Bank, she said, the tape included interviews with top personnel at the bank, which helped bring the situation to life.

Brenner said she didn't feel isolated by not being in a classroom with other students. She said she could contact instructors and classmates via voice mail, a computer bulletin board system for each class, or the regular mail.

The students in her classes included business executives around the country who were completing their degrees while working. That allowed her to exchange ideas with working professionals and get input she wouldn't have had access to in a classroom with other young students, she said.

She said she frequently talked to her instructors, which is something she might not have been able to do in a more traditional setting.

"I've heard from people who had 100 students in their class and never got to know

the instructor," she said of friends at more traditional schools.

And Brenner said she didn't miss the social life associated with college. "When I'm in college, my number one priority is to get a good education," she said, adding that she still saw friends from MCTC and Manchester High School.

However, Brenner admits the process isn't for everyone.

"It takes a lot of self-discipline," said her mother, Leona Brenner. "Without perseverance, I don't think you could do it."

Jacqueline Brenner said it takes strong time-management and communications skills to attend college long distance.

Brenner completed classes at UMUC in August 1993 and was listed among the graduating class for June 1994. She decided not to attend graduation ceremonies in Maryland, but she does have the tassel from her graduation regalia.

Brenner currently is studying at MCTC working toward a certificate in micro-computer processing in business. When she completes that, she plans to look for work that combines her interests in business and computers.

AUGUST '94

AACN²⁵ news

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF CRITICAL-CARE NURSES

A healthcare system driven by the needs of patients where critical care nurses make their optimal contribution.

BSN Program Launches This Fall on National TV

Mind Extension University (ME/U) in partnership with California State University in Dominguez Hills will offer a nationwide NLN-accredited bachelor's degree program for RNs this fall to be delivered direct to students' homes through cable television, satellite or videotape. The program is specifically designed to make higher education more accessible to the working RN by eliminating the barriers of time and distance.

"As healthcare undergoes dramatic changes with unprecedented economic challenges, the demand for highly knowledgeable professional nurses has never been greater," says AACN CEO Sarah Sanford. "Nurses must have access to quality educa-

tion programs to succeed as transformational leaders in the 21st century. We are pleased that professionals in urban and rural areas will now have the opportunity to take advantage of new technology and dynamic learning opportunities for their professional and educational advancement." The successful CSU-Dominguez Hills Statewide Nursing Program has been reaching California's underserved and multi-lifestyle populations for 13 years.

ME/U contracts with accredited universities throughout the US to offer courses and degree programs through telecommunications such as cable television, computer conferencing and e-mail, voice mail, video-

tape, satellite conferencing and telephone. They provide satellite delivery to cable television companies, and student recruitment and support services. The courses are highly interactive over the electronic media.

To enroll in this bachelor's degree completion in nursing, students must have a current RN license, a minimum of 56 semester units of transferable college credit and a minimum 2.0 grade point average. There is no on-campus requirement. A special admissions program is available to RN diploma graduates who took most of their courses in a hospital school. For more information or enrollment, call the Mind Extension University Education Center at 800-777-MIND.

THE NEWSMAGAZINE FOR EMPLOYEE LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Workforce Training News

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Mind Extension U. offers courses for corporate learners

Mind Extension University (ME/U), the distance education network, has begun providing quality programming and registration services to corporate uni-

versities.

ME/U, a subsidiary of Jones Education Network in Englewood, Colo., is the only 24-hour cable television network devoted to education. The company presently delivers fully accredited college and graduate-level courses from 25 universities to some 25 million households. Now, it's interested in providing learning opportunities to individuals within corporations.

Finance to management

The company has identi-

fied 26 university-level courses that corporations can use to augment their own education selections or "fill" their teleconferencing equipment, says Kim Schneider, director of the Educational Center. Topics include organizational communication, diversity management, international trade, total quality management and customer service.

"Companies often will bring courses in by satellite to use at a later date," she says. Programs can be sent on videotape as well.

Core ME/U classes, such as principles of accounting, make excellent corporate training courses when a company person acts as the facilitator, notes Schneider.

You don't need a corporate university to take advantage of ME/U offerings, however. Some organizations such as AT&T, only pay tuition for employees who want to take courses or earn degrees offered by the network.

Others maintain a library of ME/U programs that they then make available to other sites.

This summer, ME/U will introduce a program called "Learning to Learn" which will teach people how to engage themselves in the learning process, says Schneider. This non-credit course will be offered to corporate universities.

TTT via TV

Trainers themselves can obtain a master of arts degree in education and human development from George Washington University in Washington, D.C. via the ME/U network.

The degree program prepares professionals to manage media and technology resources such as computer labs and media centers, design curricula for technology, use technology in instructional settings and implement technology policy and decisionmaking. Thirty-six



ME/U boasts more than 1,000 students in its degree programs, with an additional 36,000 enrolled in courses.

semester hours are required to earn the M.A.

For more information about ME/U programs and registration services, call 800/727-5663 or circle InfoLink #216.



SEP 3, 1992

N10100

CE PRESS CLIPPINGS

Going back to school in your living room

More and more adults are finding time to go back to school. In fact, today 43 percent of all college students are over the age of 25. But, according to a recent survey conducted by Opinion Research Corporation, cost (79 percent), time (68 percent), responsibilities at work and home (57 percent and 55 percent), and the lack of availability of desired courses (43 percent) are preventing many adults from continuing their educations.

But many are finding that going back to school can be as convenient as

turning on the television. Through an innovative teaching process called "distance education," which brings education to students (not the other way around), lifelong learners can take classes for credit towards a college or an advanced degree — or just improve their personal and professional skills — by "attending" a television class in the privacy of their own homes.

Mind Extension University®: The Education Network™, known as ME/U, is a 24-hour education network that offers a broad range of accredited

undergraduate and graduate level courses and degree programs via cable television, satellite and video cassettes.

Courses are taught by distance education specialists from more than 20 leading universities, including Colorado State University, University of Maryland University College, and The George Washington University.

The program makes it possible for people to earn an undergraduate or graduate degree even if they don't live near a college or university or are too busy to sit in a classroom — without having to sacrifice work and family responsibilities.

Full-time mother, part-time student

In 1988, Robin Pappas wanted to take college courses, but the nearest college was 20 miles from her home in Lodi, Ohio. "I was interested in taking some accounting courses so that I could help my husband in his business," Pappas says, "but at the same time, I didn't want to do anything that would interfere with taking care of my children."

By enrolling in Mind Extension University (ME/U), Pappas has taken courses from colleges and universities across the country without leaving her children or her living room.

"The program offers me the best way to get an education and be home for my children. I like the independent study because I can fit it into my schedule," Pappas notes. "I tape the courses on my VCR and set aside an hour a day when I have quiet time to study."

How to enroll

Students can get more information about Mind Extension University (ME/U), including upcoming semester course offerings and enrolling in classes, by calling The ME/U Education Center at 1-800-777-MIND.

"Distance education brings education into the 21st century," says Glenn R. Jones, CEO of Jones Intercable, founder of Mind Extension University (ME/U) and author of *Make All America A School*. "By utilizing communications technology, we are extending the reach of our nation's learning centers to all students, regardless of age, location or circumstance. ME/U empowers Americans to learn for a lifetime — without having to leave their homes."



THE INNOVATIVE TEACHING PROCESS known as "distance education" allows this Mind Extension University Student to "attend" class in her living room.